

# NEWS RELEASE

*OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS*

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*For Immediate Release*

**SEPTEMBER 22, 2004**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on September 22, 2004, a federal grand jury returned a six-count Indictment against **EDWARD I. WUEBBELS**, age 42, of Albers, Illinois, charging: **CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION SERVICE, TO USE A SIMULATION OF A UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INSPECTION LEGEND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION WITH THE INTENT TO DEFRAUD, AND TO TRANSPORT POULTRY PRODUCTS IN COMMERCE NOT PROPERLY INSPECTED WITH THE INTENT TO DEFRAUD**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371; **MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT TO THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001; **TRANSPORTATION OF POULTRY PRODUCTS IN COMMERCE NOT PROPERLY INSPECTED AND WITH THE INTENT TO DEFRAUD**, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 458(a)(2); and **USE OF A SIMULATION OF A UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INSPECTION LEGEND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION**, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 458(b). The offenses each carry a total maximum statutory penalty of up to sixteen (16) years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$1,000,000, and up to three (3) years' supervised release.

The Indictment alleges that **EDWARD L. WUEBBELS** was employed as the Operations Manager for a trucking/warehouse/distribution company in Granite City, Illinois, that was under contract with the Illinois State Board of Education to store and deliver United States Department of Agriculture commodity food products to schools in the State of Illinois. The Indictment alleges that **WUEBBELS** caused the illegal reboxing and repackaging of commodities chicken, and the fraudulent use of USDA inspection legends. The Indictment alleges that some of the boxes of illegally reboxed commodities chicken were served to school children at the Laraway Elementary School in Will County, Illinois, which caused over 150 school children and teachers to become ill and required over 40 children and faculty to be transported by ambulance to area hospitals. The Indictment further alleges that **WUEBBELS** lied to an investigator following the incident and sought to obtain falsified shipping records concerning the commodities chicken. **WUEBBELS** is presumed innocent of the charges until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The Indictment follows an investigation conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General-Investigations; the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service; and the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration. The prosecution of the case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Norman R. Smith.